

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

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60

ACTION H-03

INFO OCT-01 EUR-08 NEA-07 ISO-00 SS-07 NSC-06 AID-01 IO-03

/036 W

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R 111511Z NOV 76

FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3743

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEL AVIV 7675

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OREP, PFOR, ENRG, IS

SUBJECT: CODEL RIBICOFF/BAKER VISIT TO ISRAEL

1. CODEL RIBICOFF/BAKER VISITED ISRAEL NOVEMBER 7-11. THERE WAS GREAT MEDIA INTEREST IN THEIR VISIT BECAUSE IT WAS THE FIRST FOLLOWING THE U.S. ELECTION AND BECAUSE IT WAS KNOWN THAT THE CODEL INTENDED TO DISCUSS NUCLEAR ENERGY. THE DELEGATION HAD LONG AND INFORMATIVE SESSIONS WITH THE PRIME MINISTER AND FOREIGN MINISTER AND A SHORTER MEETING WITH THE MINISTER OF DEFENSE. IT ALSO MET WITH FORMER PRIME MINISTER GOLDA MEIR AND WITH A GROUP FROM THE KNESSET. A SEMINAR WITH THE CODEL WAS DEVOTED TO CURRENT MIDDLE EAST DEVELOPMENTS AND ANOTHER TO ISRAEL'S ENERGY SITUATION AND PROSPECTS. THE CODEL ALSO VISITED THE GOLAN HEIGHTS.

2. PRIME MINISTER RABIN REVIEWED CURRENT MIDDLE EAST DEVELOPMENTS AND ISRAEL'S HOPES FOR THE FUTURE ALONG FAMILIAR LINES AND RESPONDED TO THE CODEL'S QUESTIONS. HE SAID HE EXPECTED U.S. MOVES TOWARD NEGOTIATIONS IN 1977 AND THAT HE WOULD WELCOME THESE MOVES BECOMING A PART OF ISRAEL'S ELECTION ISSUES. ON NUCLEAR ENERGY RABIN PROFESSED SOME CONCERN ABOUT NON-PROLIFERATION BUT SHOWED NO INCLINATION TO SIGN THE NPT AND LITTLE REGARD FOR THE IAEA (SEE TEL CONFIDENTIAL

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AVIV 7588).

3. IN HIS MEETING WITH THE CODEL, FOREIGN MINISTER ALLON ALSO INDICATED ISRAELI DISTRUST OF THE IAEA AND DISINCLINATION TO SIGN THE NPT, ALTHOUGH HE CLAIMED THAT GOI WOULD SUPPORT A NUCLEAR FREE ZONE IN THE MIDDLE EAST. HE STRESSED THE STRATEGIC CONTRIBUTION ISRAEL MAKES TO STABILITY IN THE EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN. AS DID RABIN, HE SAID ISRAEL IS ANXIOUS TO SEE MOMENTUM RESUMED TOWARD PEACE NEGOTIATIONS IN THE MIDDLE EAST (SEE THE AVIV 7616).

4. IN RESPONDING TO SENATORS' QUESTIONS, MINISTER OF DEFENSE PERES SAIS ISRAEL IS EXTENDING ALL POSSIBLE AID TO FRIENDLY VILLAGES IN SOUTH LEBANON WITHOUT COMMITTING ISRAELI TROOPS. REGARDING HIS COMPETITION WITH RABIN, PERES INDICATED HE IS KEEPING HIS OPTIONS OPEN AS THE LABOR PARTY PREPARES FOR ITS ANNUAL CONVENTION IN FEBRUARY. ON NUCLEAR MATTERS, HE SAID HE BELIEVED THAT NUCLEAR WEAPONS COULD NOT PROVIDE ANY ANSWER TO MIDDLE EAST CONFLICTS, THAT THE PRODUCTION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS BY ISRAEL WOULD BE A TECHNICAL POSSIBILITY, AND THAT HE WOULD HAVE NO DIFFICULTY WITH U.S. ASSISTANCE TO EGYPT TO BUILD A NUCLEAR POWER STATION (SEPTTEL).

5. THE SEMINAR HELD BY A NUMBER OF UNIVERSITY PROFESSORS ON CURRENT DEVELOPMENTS IN THE MIDDLE EAST GAVE THE CODEL AN OPPORTUNITY TO HEAR NON-GOVERNMENTAL VIEWS ON THE AREA AND ON ISRAEL'S POLICIES. THE SESSION WITH KNESSET MEMBERS WAS USED TO ANSWER QUESTIONS PUT BY THEM TO THE SENATORS OVER A WIDE RANGE OF SUBJECTS. THE MEETING WITH MRS. MEIR WAS PRIMARILY A SOCIAL OCCASION. THE PRESENCE OF WIVES AT ALL BRIEFINGS APPEARED TO INHIBIT THE EXCHANGE OF VIEWS VERY LITTLE.

6. MEDIA COVERAGE OF THE VISIT WAS EXTENSIVE WITH FULL TELEVISION AND PRESS REPORTS EACH DAY. THE CODEL HELD A WELL ATTENDED PRESS CONFERENCE ON THE FINAL DAY OF ITS VISIT. THE HIGHLIGHT OF THE PRESS CONFERENCE WAS SENATOR RIBICOFF'S SUGGESTION REGARDING AN APPOINTMENT AS SPECIAL ENVOY FOR SECRETARY KISSINGER (SEE TEL AVIV 7654). CODEL MEMBERS AT THE PRESS CONFERENCE PLAYED DOWN PRESS SPECULATION THAT THE GOI REFUSAL OF OUR REQUEST TO VISIT THE DIMONA NUCLEAR

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FACILITY WAS A MAJOR INCIDENT.
TOON

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Message Attributes

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Draft Date: 11 NOV 1976
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Decaption Note:
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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: KelleyW0
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
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Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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Margaret P. Grafeld
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04 MAY 2006

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